



Got Special Ed Questions? Marin County SELPA Provides Answers! Part 2: Special Education, IEPs, and Distance Learning During COVID-19

QUESTION 4:

How are districts handling the Part C to Part B transition?

ANSWER 4:

- When a child who is being served Under Part C under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (“IDEA”) approaches his or her third birthday, the school district where the child’s parent resides is required to conduct an assessment to determine whether the child is eligible for an individualized education program (IEP) and transitions to Part B of the same act. The assessment process is important because eligibility criteria for services changes significantly at age three. However, due to the COVID-19 emergency, the health and safety concerns related to that emergency, and the current state and county Shelter in Place orders, they may be unable to do a formal assessment to determine a child’s eligibility for Part B services under the IDEA.
- At the end of April, Secretary DeVos submitted a report to Congress in which she recommends extending the IDEA Part B transition timelines (Part B initial evaluation) such that a calculation of the timeline would resume no later than the day on which the Shelter in Place order is lifted. The report also recommends Part C services to continue until a Part B evaluation is complete and eligibility has been determined. Until Congress acts, school districts continue to be required to develop and implement an IEP or IFSP by the third birthday of a child participating in Part C programs and who will participate in Part B preschool programs. Considering the health and safety of all families and educators in Marin County, it is the recommendation that meetings are conducted via teleconference or videoconference.
- Families in the process of transitioning from Part C programs to Part B programs should contact the Golden Gate Regional Center (GGRC) and their specific district directly for more information related to services and programming during the Shelter in Place.



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QUESTION 5:

Can new services be recommended and implemented through an IEP during the Shelter in Place?

ANSWER 5:

Yes, new services can be recommended through an IEP and implemented through a distance learning plan during the Shelter in Place. Since the IEP process continues during the Shelter in Place, the student's distance learning plan will reflect the newly identified service. When school resumes, the IEP team may need to convene a meeting to review the continued need for the service as recommended in the IEP.



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QUESTION 6:

How can parents support students who struggle to access distance learning plans due to behavioral outbursts during online instruction?

ANSWER 6:

It is important during this time that parents and educators communicate and collaborate to implement distance learning plans that meet the needs of students to the extent that is possible and feasible. Parents of students with behavioral needs should reach out to their student's classroom teacher and/or special education case manager to share information about the student's behaviors during online instruction and work collaboratively to develop a plan to support the student. Parents and educators may consider implementing individualized behavior support systems including, but not limited to: a token economy, a rewards-based positive behavior supports/charts, and providing increased daily virtual check-ins. Families and schools are encouraged to work together to develop individualized interventions that support the student's academic engagement. In the case of students for whom online/computer-based learning is not working, parents and educators are encouraged to explore alternative modalities, including hard copies of assignments and the provision of materials for parents to engage with their student in hands-on activities in the home.